

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A method for manufacturing and assembling hot runner systems, the method comprising the steps of:

manufacturing a plurality of manifold plates for hot runner systems[, injection nozzles, and plugs];

adding heating elements to the manifold plates;

drilling flow channels into the manifold plates;

placing the manifold plates[, the injection nozzles, and the plugs] in stock;

taking orders with specifications for hot runner systems;

removing from stock the manifold plates, [the] injection nozzles, and [the] plugs that correspond to the specifications of the orders;

boring out holes for the plugs in the manifold plates at locations that correspond to the specifications of the orders;

inserting the plugs into the bored out holes of the manifold plates; and

attaching the nozzles to the manifold plates in alignment with the plugs.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the specifications comprise at least one of nozzle types, nozzle pitches, manifold shapes, manifold lengths, and manifold thickness.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of milling grooves in the manifold plates and inserting the heating elements into the grooves.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of grinding the manifold plates to dimensions that correspond to the specifications of the orders.
5. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of drilling holes in the manifold plates around the bored out holes for attaching the nozzles to the manifold plates.
6. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of boring out slots for alignment pins in the manifold plates next to the bored out holes.
7. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of aligning plug channels of the plugs with the flow channels of the manifold plates.
8. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of aligning plug channels of the plugs with the flow channels of the manifold plates and melt channels of the nozzles.
9. (Currently amended) A method for manufacturing and assembling hot runner systems, the method comprising the steps of:
- manufacturing a plurality of manifold plates for hot runner systems[, injection nozzles, and plugs];
 - milling grooves in the manifold plates;
 - drilling flow channels into the manifold plates;

inserting heating elements into the grooves;
placing the manifold plates[, the injection nozzles, and the plugs] in stock;
taking orders with specifications for hot runner systems;
removing from stock the manifold plates, [the] injection nozzles, and [the] plugs
that correspond to the specifications of the orders;
boring out holes for the plugs in the manifold plates at locations that correspond
to the specifications of the orders;
drilling holes in the manifold plates around the bored out holes for attaching the
nozzles to the manifold plates;
inserting the plugs into the bored out holes of the manifold plates; and
attaching the nozzles to the manifold plates in alignment with the plugs.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein the specifications comprise at least one of nozzle types, nozzle pitches, manifold shapes, manifold lengths, and manifold thickness.
11. (Original) The method of claim 9 further comprising the step of grinding the manifold plates to dimensions that correspond to the specifications of the orders.
12. (Original) The method of claim 9 further comprising the step of boring out slots for alignment pins in the manifold plates next to the bored out holes.
13. (Original) The method of claim 9 further comprising the step of aligning plug channels of the

plugs with the flow channels of the manifold plates.

14. (Original) The method of claim 9 further comprising the step of aligning plug channels of the plugs with the flow channels of the manifold plates and melt channels of the nozzles.

21. (Currently amended) A method for manufacturing and assembling hot runner systems, the method comprising the steps of:

partially manufacturing a plurality of [molding] components that form at least a portion of a hot runner system in a first phase;

placing the [molding] components in stock;

receiving an order with specifications for a hot runner system;

removing the [molding] components from stock; and

further manufacturing the [molding] components in accordance with the specifications of the order in a second phase.

22. (Previously added) The method of claim 21 wherein the specifications comprise at least one of nozzle types, nozzle pitches, manifold shapes, manifold lengths, and manifold thickness.

23. (Previously added) The method of claim 21 wherein the molding components comprise a manifold plate, and further comprising the step of milling a groove in the manifold plate and inserting a heating element into the groove.

24. (Previously added) The method of claim 21 wherein, the molding components comprise a manifold plate, and further comprising the step of grinding the manifold plate to dimensions that correspond to the specifications of the order.

25. (Previously added) The method of claim 21 further comprising the step of assembling the molding components into an incomplete hot runner system in the first phase.

26. (Previously added) The method of claim 25 further comprising the step of further assembling the molding components into a complete hot runner system in accordance with the specifications of the order in the second phase.
